Chapter Two
2.1 Importance of Human Resources

When we think about the greatest accomplishments of the 20th century we may find a number of events like landing on the Moon, invention of the Computer, Biogenetic engineering etc., We find a common feature in every major advance of this century, that is "organisation". In this organisation people create innovations. Assets make things possible but people make things happen because people are not inanimate resources like land or capital, but they are human resources. It is people who produce a nation's valued products and services and these valued outputs determines a society's well-being and its standard of living.¹

2.2. Need for Women's Involvement in All Activities

No country can advance while a large segment of its population lags behind. As a major human resource it is essential to involve women in all activities of the country.

In 1960's women questioned the possibilities of having family and holding a job at the same time, and the parents of an employed girl would apologetically tell the prospective groom that their daughter works just to while away time. But by the mid 1980's these attitudes of women have changed because of five forces. They are:
(a) **Changes in the family** - Legalised abortion, divorce, contraception etc., have contributed to a decrease in the proportion of most women's lives devoted to rearing children. Now they are important providers of the family income.

(b) **Changes in education** - Ever since World War II increasing number of women have been attending colleges.

(c) **Changes in self perception** - Due to the rise in the conscious level of both women and men, women can be given a fair chance to think and make an intelligent choice and then to be considered for promotions on an equal basis with men.

(d) **Changes in technology** - Both in the home and work force, advances in technology have reduced the physical effort and time required to accomplish tasks. and

(e) **Changes in economy** - Ever since World War II there has been a shift away from goods production to service related industries.

With these changes there is every chance for women to involve in the workforce as an important human resource. ²

2.3. **WOMEN'S POSITION FROM ANCIENT PERIOD**

Some of the features of equality of women in ancient period noted by historians may be briefly mentioned below.

(a) Women along with men received education, participated in popular assemblies, took part in debates (Shastrartha)
observed Brahma charya and Upanayana was performed for them.

(b) Women could own property.

(c) The wife was given a place of honour and participated with her husband in religious ceremonies.

Woman in Vedic India was considered to be a Goddess like the Greek Goddess Athena. They enjoyed liberty till the advent of Muslim rule. During Muslim rule women were confined to homes. The woman became the target of Muslim king's lust, her position still continued to go down in the Gupta period. In this period,

(a) Dowry emerged as an institution.

(b) Widow remarriage was not allowed.

(c) Women had no right to property.

In later years, the birth of a daughter was considered bad luck. Giving freedom to women may be considered the predecessor of doom. Women are largely uneducated. Conservation, superstition and belief in magic or witchcraft were part of women's existence. Female infanticide, child marriage, purdah, sati and slavery were the main social evils affecting the conditions of women.

During the British period some of the social problems attracted the attention of the British administrators and also active Indian social workers like Raja Rammohan Rai, Iswarchandra Vidyasagar etc. They worked hard to root out these social evils.
In the post independence period in India, and also the decades 1960's and 1970's we saw a universal movement amongst women for equality with men.

All over the world feminism has its origin in inequalities between men and women and in discrimination and oppression of women. In recent years women wanted to come out of the four walls of their households and show their capabilities and strength in various fields. 3

For better understanding of the socio-economic condition of women in India it is necessary to observe some important indicators like health, literacy and education, politics, marital status, crimes against women and acts on women's rights, economic independence, changing attitudes of women in urban and rural areas etc.

I. HEALTH

Consider the health condition of women. Compared to males the death rate is higher for women at any age; the life expectancy of females is lower than males; the food intake is lower; the access to health is scarcer. In most homes of India the largest and most nutritious share of food is given to the male bread winner and only the next best to the women, Girls, and older women come last. The instances of nutritional differences and disabilities like anemia and night blindness are higher among girls. Compulsory child marriage has played havoc with the physical and mental health of the Indian girls. While she is
still a child she is charged with heavy responsibilities, pregnancy and family rearing etc. Indian women perform at the rate of 24-hour multi-purpose worker. Even now in the rural areas only a little per cent of population have access to modern health care centres during pregnancy and child birth. And more than half of the women have no trained help. Only a third have access to family planning. Most of the health problems were prevented by better nutrition, water, sanitation, education and immunisation etc.  

Health conditions can not be dealt with in isolation. The conditions of health and education are closely interdependant. The extent to which the health conditions can improve will depend on people's knowledge which is acquired through education and observation. So the next important issue which I want to analyse is literacy and education levels of women in India.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2.1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DECLINING SEX RATIO OF WOMEN (For 1000 Males)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>927  964  955  950  945  946  941  930  933  921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: N. Mononmoney, "problems and prospects of women in India", Southern Economist, p. 19
NUMBER OF WOMEN FOR 1000 MALES IN INDIA

Figure 2.1
Table 2.2

LIFE EXPECTANCY IN INDIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1951-61</td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td>40.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961-71</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>45.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971-81</td>
<td>54.1</td>
<td>54.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-91</td>
<td>55.9</td>
<td>55.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: N. Mononmoney, "problems and prospects of women in India," Southern Economist, p. 20

II. LITERACY AND EDUCATION

The University Education Commission stated the importance of women's education in these words: "There can't be any educated people without educated women. If general education has to be limited to men or women the opportunity should be given to women for then it would most surely be passed on to the next generation."  

When we study the actual condition in India, as per the women's population 75 per cent of them are illiterate and in some of the remote areas the rate of female literacy is even below 5 per cent. In almost half of the country the female literacy rate is below 15 per cent. Very few girls are enrolled in schools and very small number of girls reach high school or secondary school stage. Exclusion of the vast masses of people from educational opportunities affects women much more adversely than men. 75 per
Life Expectancy in India

Percentage of Life in Years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1961-61</td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961-71</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971-81</td>
<td>64.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-91</td>
<td>65.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2.2

21(a)
of villages in India don’t have a primary school at present. There will be 48.8 million illiterate children, 22.6 million boys and 26.1 million girls in the 6-11 age group in the country. These children will grow as adult illiterates. The quality of education is a crucial element in shaping the ‘women resource’ for economic development. Social attitudes towards women’s education seem to be rather negative. According to a survey carried out in 1971, 16.8 per cent of the respondents rejected the view that a girl should be educated at all and 64.5 per cent disapproved higher education for girls.

As for studies, educational programmes suffer from the following limitations so far as women are concerned.

(a) Unadapted to the needs of women
(b) Bad timings, because girls look after the young ones, assist their mother in the households during the school timing.
(c) Early marriage
(d) Heavy family responsibilities at young age
(e) poor nutrition
(f) Perceived irrelevance of the education to the tasks they are going to take up. 7

Now the new educational policy envisages that education will be used as an agent of social change in the status of women. For this the following steps are undertaken;
(a) Stress on women teachers under operation black board
(b) Non-formal education to be treated as a programme of women's development by linking it with condensed course and special training of women instructors. 

(c) National literacy machine to have a special focus on women's equality and running of centres for women

(d) Vocationalisation has been given special stress

(e) A large programme of women's polytechnics is being taken up in technical education, and women's studies would continue to receive attention in higher education. 

Table 2.3
LITERACY RATE IN INDIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>29.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>39.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: N. Monomoney, "problems and prospects of women in India", Southern Economist, p. 20

The above Table shows that the literacy rate is increasing year by year but male literacy rate is still dominating the female literacy.
Literacy Rate in India

Percentage of Literacy Rate

Years

Figure 2.3

23(a)
III. MARITAL STATUS OF WOMEN

In India marriage only confers on women widows, and unmarried women are treated more scornfully than married women. Marriage is a sacrament in Hinduism and other religions except Islam where it is a mere civil contract. In Vedic period in the matter of selecting their partners in marriage women had equal rights. There are certain references like 'SWAYAMVARA' marriages. In recent years the trend turned from arranged marriages to love marriages, but mostly they are not successful because of various social conditions. So preference is given to arranged marriages where the authority is held in the hands of parents, not in the hands of grooms. 12

One of the vices in Muslim law is the position of women is characterised by inequality. According to this law a Muslim husband is entitled to have four wives at a time. The husband can divorce his wife unilaterally without any fault or cause.

Among Christian women also inequality is noticed. Section 10 of the Indian Divorce Act 1869 provides that the husband is entitled to obtain divorce on the ground of the wife's adultery, but the wife has to prove an aggravating circumstance in addition to adultery such as apostasy or marriage with another woman by the husband. 5(b)

In Indian marriages dowry plays an important role. Public figures also offer as well as demand dowry for their sons and
daughters. Even after years of married life the husbands and the in-laws harass the daughters-in-law in the capital to bring dowry amount or some more articles. Recently, a number of such cases resulted in kerosene burns, suicides and bride burnings.

In olden days social norms prohibited a widow from marrying again. Widows must live in the family as slaves. Taking advantage of that, the other members can exploit her sexually.

Divorce is against Hindu mythology. Nowadays educated women dare to part from their husbands when they feel like it. But they have to suffer humiliation as well as social ostracism when they get divorced.

In India, women regard marriage as a social necessity. Those women who are less favourable towards marriage and like to remain spinsters may have to face dire consequences in their later life. They may have to suffer social isolation and loneliness with no protection. These women may have economic security but they are not likely to get proper social security and suitable partner to share the difficulties in their old age. Celibacy is not suitable for Indian society due to lack of old age homes and old age pension schemes etc., 12

IV. ACTS ON WOMEN’S RIGHTS AND CRIMES AGAINST WOMEN

A. Important legislation regarding women -

(1) Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 and Special Marriage Act, 1954 were amended by the Marriage Laws Amendment Act, 1956 to provide
the right for a girl to repudiate before attaining maturity.

(2) Child Marriage Restraint (Amendment) Act, 1978 raised the age of marriage for girls and boys from 15 and 18 years to 18 and 21.

(3) The Factories (Amendment) Act, 1976 provides for establishment of creches where 30 or more women are employed. Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 provides equal remuneration to men and women workers and for prevention of discrimination on the ground of sex against the women in the matter of employment and for matters connected there with or incidental to it.

(4) Maturity Benefit Act, 1961 was amended in April 1976 to cover women, who do not fall within the purview of the employees state Insurance act, 1948.

(5) The Criminal Law Amendment bills were passed by parliament in 1983, which amended the Indian Penal Code, Indian Evidence Act and the Criminal Procedure Code to make offences of rape and such other crimes against women including those committed by husband and other relations, more stringent effective and punishable.

(6) Immoral Traffic (prevention) Act, 1986 covers all persons whether male or female, who are exploited sexually for commercial purpose.

(7) Dowry Prohibition Act (Amendment) 1986 makes the provisions of the act more stringent and effective. Minimum punishment for taking or abetting the dowry has been raised to one year and a fine of Rs. 15,000.
The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986 has been passed with the objective of having separate legislation to effectively prohibit the indecent representation of women in advertisements, books, pamphlets etc. Offences under this act are punishable with imprisonment for a term extending to two years and fine extending to Rs. 2,000 on first conviction.

The Commission of Sati (prevention) Act, 1987. Any one who abets the commitment of Sati would be punished by the maximum penalty i.e., death or imprisonment for life.

The National Commission for Women Act undertakes several tasks regarding women. This National commission for women bill, 1990 was tabled in parliament at the end of May of the year and subsequently passed.

11. The constitution of India guarantees equality of sexes and infact grants special favours to women. These can be found in three articles of the constitution.

(a) Article 14 says that the government shall not deny to any person equality before law or the equal protection of the laws.

(b) Article 15 declares that government shall not discriminate against any citizen on the ground of sex only. No citizen shall be barred from roads, shops, hotels or public places on the grounds of sex only.

(c) Article 16 guarantees that no citizen shall be discriminated against in matters of public employment on the ground of sex only.
B. Crimes against women

It is deplorable to find that all these safeguards will not be able to decrease the crimes against women. Various types of crimes against women are increasing year by year.

**TABLE 2.4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of cases</th>
<th>1988</th>
<th>1989</th>
<th>1990</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Dowry Murders</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Dowry Deaths</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Attempt to commit suicide</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Harassment</td>
<td>902</td>
<td>1342</td>
<td>1363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Murders</td>
<td>587</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Rapes</td>
<td>501</td>
<td>547</td>
<td>629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) Kidnappings and abduction</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>502</td>
<td>510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) Molestation</td>
<td>1635</td>
<td>1953</td>
<td>2109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>4376</td>
<td>5143</td>
<td>5855</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Offered to prove harassment is that of the women's parents whose accounts are taken to be unreliable because they are interested witnesses. Suicide rates and dying declarations are often dismissed on technical grounds. Postmortem reports given the delays and bureaucratic tangles in our system might not reveal
external injuries if there is some time lag between the time of offence and the time of conducting the examination.

Now different social organisations and women’s groups are coming up to make organised efforts and to draw the attention of the state to the consistent violation of women’s basic right to life. 10

V. Women and politics

In all societies sex is related to political activity. Men are more active than women. In India women’s first brush with politics was during Gandhiji’s call for ‘Jail Bharo’. During Second world war more men were recruited in the British Army. In that period feminisation of politics was fast approaching a high pitch.

In earlier years Anasuyabai Kale, Tarabai sethe, Rosa Dange etc., played a prominent role in parliament. 11 The late Raj Kumari Amrit Kaur was a minister in the central cabinet of free India. Sucheta Kupalani successfully fulfilled her responsibilities as the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh. So was Padmaja Naidu, the Governor of West Bengal. Moreover the most important and powerful post of the country is held by a lady Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India. Not only India but the whole world feels proud to have a woman at the helm of affairs of the largest democracy in the world. 6
All the good work was done by women in politics before independence and up to 1966. From 1972 onwards tickets were distributed to women, who were forced to accept on compassionate grounds such as a vacancy in the constituency due to the death of a husband, father or brother. These women were uneducated and ineffective, in legislature. During that time political parties often shy away from putting up a female candidate. The ticket is given to women only if the party is sure of losing the seat unless it is given to a lady representative.

Only one or two women candidates can boast of true democratic ethics of fighting the elections. Most of them have substantial personal wealth or well known political pedigree.

Women who hold popular portfolios are supposed to hear and heed women’s grievances. They do not truly help the women’s cause. They invariably turn a deaf ear to the real problems. Even today the worst representation and participation of women is seen in Panchayats.

Today the nation has become strong so that women have to work for women in the way women desire. This idea will take strong root specially when women realise thier strength in self interest as the newly emerging powerful voting force. 11

VI. WOMEN AND HER PARTICIPATION IN ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

In primitive societies man was the food gatherer. It is through hunting that he used to get animal flesh. It was
immaterial for the women whether he faced danger while hunting or not. It was his duty to provide food for his family members. The woman had to stay in her cave to protect her children. She was never a participant. She was only a 'helper' and an automatic subordinate. But with the advent of cultivation, it has become compulsory on the part of woman to participate in the outdoor work. As such she used to take part in agricultural operations like weeding, transplanting and harvesting in the fields and in every other type of work that she could. In those days women worked in their farms and co-operated with their own family members. The idea of women working along with other persons on wages is not favourably received in India.

In recent years it has become essential for women to come out of their homes due to their economic compulsion, soaring price rise, preference for modern living, to utilise the acquired knowledge and education, geographical and occupational mobility and the emergence of new economic patterns etc.,

In poor families the social conditions of women are better comparatively than in high level families because of their economic independence. Knowing this fact today, a large number of women are coming out. Today bridegrooms are opting for the working women rather than dowry so as to have continuous income for the family. Several girls are now playing a 'brother' role by financing their younger siblings. They are supporting themselves and contributing to the family income. After
industrialisation, many industrial jobs required education for efficient performance. Due to the nature of certain jobs and the shortage of adequate educated persons to handle, their women are induced to take up these jobs out of sheer necessity.

Now women are working in almost all types of jobs such as technical, professional and non professional in both private and public sectors. Now they are working outside the home as pilots, taxi drivers, women police, ambassadors, ministers and heads of nations, managers, entrepreneurs etc., 12 In banking sector the percentage of women employees has risen from 28 per cent in 1960 to 68 per cent in 1980. In national scene, of an overall 10 per cent increase in recruitment 2 per cent is shared by women. They constitute 6 per cent in all civil service, 7.5 per cent in Indian administrative service and 10 per cent in Indian Foreign service. 16
### Table 2.5

WORK PARTICIPATION RATE IN INDIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>48.9</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>49.1</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td>19.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>27.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>49.0</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>51.6</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: N. Manonmoney, "Problems and prospects of women in India", *Southern Economist* p. 20

Women now began to live with different motives. Some wanted to occupy a gainful job because of permanent or temporary inadequacy like sudden death of father, husband or some other earning member. Doing a job becomes a fashion to some women, depending on their ages, place of residence and education. Employment will provide higher status to employed women than unemployed women. 12
Work participation rate in India

Work participation rate (in percentage)

Years

- Rural
- Urban
- Total
- Rural

Figure 2.4
(a) **Performance of women as managers**

A number of women are entering the management ranks in various organisations. They would prefer interactive leadership patterns where as men are more likely to use power that comes from their organisational position and formal authority. To facilitate inclusion they use a conversational style that comes naturally to them. Women leaders are bringing up others and also their sensitivity to the grievances of people below. Women seem to be more gifted than men, particularly in recognising those motivational needs of people which affect human sensitivities.  

(b) **Women entrepreneurs**

Women had good ideas for their projects but they needed guidance, many of them did not know how to prepare feasibility reports or of the existence of counseling centres. It is necessary to give a boost to women in setting up industrial units as also in procuring the products made by all women’s organisations on priority basis. Now there is no distinction of sex to any one becoming an entrepreneur. The government should take efforts to bring women into industrial activities. The following suggestions may be considered in this direction.

1. Reorientation of educational system for women with due emphasis on career guidance. Entrepreneur awareness should start with school curricular itself.
2. Additional concessions for women for setting up industrial units.
(3) Provision of composite loan covering fixed and working capital requirements.
(4) Simplifying and streamlining the procedures availing of special schemes for woman entrepreneurs.
(5) Follow up support in marketing their products.
(6) Preference to the products manufactured by women.
(7) Upgrading the skill of existing women entrepreneurs in various aspects of management.  

(c) Couples in business

Today, more husbands and wives are joining forces to survive in an increasingly competitive world, women are playing vital roles in business that range from service oriented ones such as public relations to sale of machinery. There are several advantages of working together as most couples agree. A major benefit is that they can play complementary role in an atmosphere of trust. There is no scope for suspicion. If outsiders have to be hired for key roles, secrecy and security can be causalities. A family member will take care of things much better than an outsider who is highly paid. There are some disadvantages also, for example quarrels at home threatening to break the peace in the office.

When husband and wife work together there arises the question, who is the boss? On the surface it seems to be the man. Yet women in business are not mere appendages to their husbands even if all husbands do not recognise the fact.
VII. **CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYED WOMEN**

(a) **Rural Area**

In India 4/5 of population lives in villages. Ignorance, poverty and helpless resignation to a hostile environment have retarded rural progress. So the development of rural community becomes a primary concern to the government. Those developmental programmes include opening of schools, starting of nutritional programmes, family planning schemes, planning of family and child welfare programmes etc., These schemes created various kinds of employment opportunities for women. They took the jobs as primary and secondary school teachers, gramsevikas, nurses, health visitors, family planning workers and the like. But things were not working smoothly for these women employees and they are confronted with various problems.

In rural areas women’s role is mainly of an innovation. The employment of women and their role are novelties to the villagers. As the agent of change the employed woman is liable to suffer from the resistance of the villagers.

I. **Employed women and their families**

Women in villages are more orthodox in caste restrictions. So employed women may not appoint other caste women as their servants because in such situations, other women in that caste would avoid going to their houses and take tea, water etc.,
Labour saving domestic appliances are regarded as luxury articles by the government, so the prices of these articles are beyond the means of rural employed women.

When relatives of employed women stay with her then it is possible to get help, but in village life there is neither excitement nor entertainment. So generally they don't like to stay in villages.

In India by tradition wife is supposed to be dependent on her husband. If a woman works outside it is regarded that her husband is not capable of supporting her and family. So he is held in low esteem by the people. Under these circumstances it is not possible for him to help his wife in work.

Another problem with Hindu women is she has to perform various religious rituals or vratas which consume a lot of her time and energy because preparation of preliminary preparations and special dishes falls on women. Moreover on some of the holidays they would have to work with hungry stomach because of fast.

II. Woman and her office

In India women will receive training for acquisition of technical skills but no training is provided in the general study of the social structure of the community; That is why women will not act as efficient agents of change.
Another problem is they are not sufficiently acquainted with the official procedures and formalities; when they take the help of male colleagues people suspect that something is going on in between them. The pair becomes a subject of teasing and gossiping. On the other hand some male colleagues exploit them for these things.

In many cases officers say that women have neither ability nor any urge to do the official work. We often hear of frightful and shocking incidents of molestation of women employees in villages. Transfers dislocate family life of the women employees, specially of the married ones. They are confronted with the problems of the education of children, maintaining households at two places, of adjustment to the new situation and the like.

Touring is a pre-requisite of these rural employed women. All the workers are very unhappy with this part of their duty. On many occasions they have to sit near the officers and non-officials in the same vehicle, it leads to undue liberties with them. When they go to male superiors, villagers are suspicious about them. 16

(b) In Urban area

In urban areas conditions of women are not as adverse as in rural area. In rural areas agriculture and blue collar jobs don’t have social status nearer to men because they have no education and opportunities for interaction except within a narrow
field. In urban area women with white collar jobs receive more respect from the society because:

(1) They require a fair amount of education and some of them require a good amount of further training also;

(2) Possibility of interaction with a number of people would broaden one’s vision and strengthen one’s confidence in facing life situations;

(3) Provides opportunities for active participation in associations like clubs, trade unions etc.; and

(4) Gives opportunities for going out of home without companions.

I. woman and her family

Husbands of working women are slowly involving in participation of household tasks. Caste restrictions about servants would decrease slowly due to the emergence of nuclear families. Women who perform high professions like medicine, teaching, law etc., are able to purchase various gadgets which decrease the difficulties in doing household work. Generally the higher the family income the more liberal-minded the members are likely to be and the more freedom women would have at home. Employed women are found to be more effective decision makers on children-centered matters and they would spend family income more reasonably.
II. Woman and her office

Superiors allot more work to women than men because women do not question them about their discrimination.

Women in superior positions have the further problem of enforcing discipline on male subordinates who would revolt at the very thought of obedience to women.

Job satisfaction and participation in trade union activities would depend upon the co-operation they receive from male colleagues. 13

III. Work of women in informal sector

Report of the National Commission on Self Employed Women Shram Shakti (1988) states that 89 per cent of women workers are in the 'unorganised sector'. The multiple roles played by women at different levels of economic life are not perceived because of the definition of work as 'for pay or profit'.

Health hazards, economic exploitation, representation and non-representation in the media and social norms are some of the problems faced by the women in this sector. Women who are not technically self-employed yet suffer the worst at the hands of the contractors, traders, and forest authorities.

The Commission emphasised that the generation of accurate data on the extent and nature of women's work is an essential pre-requisite for any meaningful policy of employment generation. 19
Whether it is rural area or urban and white collar job or blue collar job working women suffer in between the two pressures working on her simultaneously: one to be a good wife, and another to be an efficient employee. Problems of employed women would adversely affect the developmental programmes meant for the millions of people suffering from poverty, illiteracy and poor standard of public health, and whose development is linked with India’s progress as a nation.

2.4. CONCLUSION

Conditions of women are improving day by day but not upto the standards of the expectations. Indian women are as capable of doing anything in the world, for example, the world’s first professional line women pilot was an Indian Captain Durba Banerjee, the world’s best runner P. T. Usha established many records, Sarojini Naidu the nightingale of India was a well-known writer in the world. A number of Indian women are entering various fields and also performing as best competitors in the world.

Women have to be thoroughly brain washed with regard to their position and status in the family and in society, so as to make them believe that they are no more the weaker and inferior sex. She has to be made conscious of her capabilities.
Women must be respected and honoured and their work must be praised and rewarded. If the women are not bestowed with utmost respect and benevolence, the humanity can not survive. Where women are honoured, there, God is pleased.

The Government of India is giving top priority to women's studies and introducing various programmes for the development of women. We will see the problems on implementation of those programmes in the next chapter.
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